



Queens Park Rangers manager Dave Sexton (right) enjoying a cigar at Wycombe Wanderers' dinner and dance in the Bellhouse Hotel Beaconsfield. Other guests of chairman Jack Smethurst (centre) are cartoonist David Langdon and Rothmans Isthmian League chairman Barry East (second and third from the left).

Character made us champions says manager

WYCOMBE Wanderers won the Rothmans Isthmian League championship more through character than skill, manager Brian Lee said at the club's F.A. Cup celebration dinner and dance on Friday night.

In thanking several people for the club's success, the manager thought it was a combination of supporters, committeemen and the players that was so vital for club spirit. "We came through with determination and got our just rewards at the end. You should be proud," he told them.

Mr Lee, who almost missed the dinner through illness, paid tribute to Rothmans of Pall Mall for their contribution to the game and especially for the "two most important ingredients—sportsmanship and attacking play." Looking back over the season, Mr Lee felt Dave Alexander's penalty in the game at home to Bishop's Stortford was one of the key points in the campaign. "We had to win that game and we owe an awful lot to that particular shot," he said.

The manager concluded: "I have been proud of the players this season and was very proud at Middlesbrough."

Brian Lee was responding the toast of the club mate by Tony Williams of Rothmans. In his speech Mr Williams thanked Wanderers for showing "that the Rothmans ideals in football were right." He went on to say that, although inevitably, there were hangers-on in the game of football, the players, referees and supporters in the Rothmans Isthmian League were really genuine people. "Those who are here tonight have a love of the

game and I feel the strength of the game is at this level," he said.

Mr Williams also recalled the epic F.A. Cup third round replay at Middlesbrough, especially the standing ovation given to the Wycombe players by the Ayresome Park crowd. "It was a marvellous moment for those of us who were there."

He concluded with a plea to the club's supporters. "The har-

dest thing in football is to stay at the top. In the coming weeks, Wycombe may not win the league again, but stick by our club and be loyal. And when the club is not doing so well you must make sure you lift them."

Keith Mead, who captained the Blues on their tour to Yugoslavia recently, welcomed the guests who included Queens Park Rangers manager Dave

Sexton, Oxford United chief scout Fred Fox, Dr John Williams, league chairman Barry East and Alan Parry of the B.B.C.

It was Mr Parry who concluded the speeches and he reflected on the Wycombe Wanderers v Middlesbrough clashes. Mr Parry was covering the match for the B.B.C. and paid a glowing tribute to the club by saying, "I have covered F.A. Cup finals, European Cup finals and World Cup finals in my work but no match gave me more entertainment than that day against Middlesbrough at Loakes Park. The amateur club was magnificent and a credit to non-league football. It was surely the greatest day in Wycombe's 90 year history."

League chairman Barry East presented the players with their championship plaques and to mark the achievement of reaching the third round of the F.A. Cup for the first time, the players and officials of the club, and their wives, were presented with silver goblets.